

Message Text

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11

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 ACDA-10

TRSE-00 OMB-01 AID-05 /067 W

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R 010605Z JUL 76 ZDK

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 306

INFO SECDEF WASHDC

DIRNSA WASHDC

USIA WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

UNCLAS BANGKOK 19067

USIA PASS IEA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MARR, MPOL, MILI, TH

SUBJECT: PHICHAI REMARKS JUNE 29 ON AIT AND ICS

1. FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL USIS TRANSLATION OF EXCERPTS FROM FOREIGN MINISTER PHICHAI RATTAKAN'S PRESS CONFERENCE JUNE 29 IN WHICH HE RESPONDED TO QUESTIONS ON AIT AND ICS.

2. BEGIN EXCERPTS

REPORTER: WILL THE DOCUMENT BE DRAFTED FOR THE AGREEMENT TURNING OVER AMERICAN EQUIPMENT TO US BEFORE THE 20TH?

PHICHAI: THE 20TH OF WHAT MONTH?

REPORTER: JULY 20. WILL THE CEREMONY OF TURNING OVER AND ACCEPTING EQUIPMENT FROM WHITEHOUSE HAVE TO BE PERFORMED?

PHICHAI: YES.

REPORTER: WHEN?

PHICHAI: IT WILL MOST PROBABLY BE VERY SOON.

REPORTER: WHY IS IT THAT YOU LIKE TO MEET IN THE EVENINGS.

IT ALWAYS MAKES ME MISS THE NEWS.

PHICHAI: THE CEREMONY WILL MOST PROBABLY BE VERY SOON,

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BECAUSE FULL AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE HAS BEEN ALREADY REACHED.

THAI TECHNICIANS AND THE MILITARY ARE EXAMINING THE EQUIPMENT
AT PRESENT.

REPORTER: HAS AGREEMENT BEEN REACHED ON AIT YET?

PHICHAO: AS I HAVE ALREADY INFORMED YOU, AND SEVERAL
TIMES, AIT IS KEPT HERE IN THAILAND.

REPORTER: IT IS KEPT HERE, BUT DOES IT BELONG TO US?

CAN WE USE IT?

PHICHAO: FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WILL HAVE TO BE HELD.

REPORTER: DOES THAT MEAN WE CAN'T USE IT AT PRESENT?

THOUGH IT IS IN THAILAND, IT IS NOT CONSIDERED YET AS
BELONG TO US.

PHICHAO: IT DOESN'T BELONG TO US YET, BUT IT IS HERE IN
THAILAND. NOW, MANY PEOPLE ARE AFRAID THAT THE U.S. WILL TAKE
AWAY THAT AMMUNITION, BUT IT IS A FACT THAT NOBODY PAID MUCH,
IF ANY INTEREST IN IT FORMERLY. IT IS ONLY DURING THE PAST
TWO MONTHS THAT PEOPLE HAVE TURNED TO AND CONCENTRATED ON IT.
NOW WE REALIZE TO WHAT EXTENT WE NEED THAT AMMUNITION, WE MUST
HOLD NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE U.S.S. AND INFORM IT, "I WANT THAT
AMMUNITION." NEGOTIATIONS WILL DECIDE WHETHER IT WILL CONTINUE
REMAINING IN THAILAND, BUT WHETHER WE MUST BUY IT, OR WHETHER
IT WILL BE GIVEN US FREE OF CHARGE, DEPENDS ON NEGOTIATIONS.
THEREFORE, I WISH TO ASSURE SOME PERSONS WHO FEEL CONCERN
THAT THAILAND WILL RUN OUT OF AMMUNITION, THAT THEY NEED NOT
WORRY, THAT WE HAVE AMMUNITION.

REPORTER: HAS THE PROBLEM REGARDING THE ICS SYSTEM BEEN
OVERCOME?

PHICHAO: IT HAS BEEN OVERCOME SATISFACTORILY. FORMERLY,
BEFORE THIS GOVERNMENT TOOK OFFICE, THERE WAS SOME TALK THAT
THE U.S. WOULD SELL IT. BUT AFTER NEGOTIATIONS WERE HELD AS
GOOD FRIENDS, AGREEMENT WAS REACHED FOR IT TO BE TURNED OVER
TO US.

REPORTER: WHAT ABOUT THE REQUEST THE U.S. MADE TO US, THE
REQUEST FOR A SITE FOR REFUELING ITS PLANES? HAVE WE AGREED
TO THAT REQUEST?

PHICHAO: THE REFUELING OF PLANES IS SOMETHING VERY ORDINARY.
AS I HAVE TOLD YOU BEFORE, SHOULD IT BE NECESSARY FOR
WARPLANES TO BE REFUELLED, OR SHOULD THERE BE ANY EMERGENCY,
IT IS THE CUSTOM OR TRADITION FOR EVERY COUNTRY TO REQUEST
PERMISSION FROM THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE OF THE COUNTRY
TO USE A BASE FOR REFUELING OR FOR AN EMERGENCY LANDING.

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REPORTER: DOES THAT MEAN THAT THERE WILL BE A PROJECT, WHICH
GOVES SPECIAL RIGHTS?

PHICHAO: NOT AT ALL. AMERICA IS A TRUE FRIEND OF OURS,
THEREFORE NO PROBLEM WHATSOEVER WILL BE FACED.

REPORTER: ANY AND EVERY COUNTRY CAN DELIBERATELY CREATE
EMERGENCY CONDITIONS. BUT IN NORMAL CONDITIONS...

PHICHAO: WHAT I MEAN IS IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY, NOT IN
AN EMERGENCY SITUATION. FOR INSTANCE, AN EMERGENCY MIGHT OCCUR,

SUCH AS A WARPLANE BEING COMPELLED TO LAND IN ORDER TO INFLATE
THE TIRE OF A PLANE, OR FOR REPAIRS TO THE PLANE. IN SUCH CAES,
THERE MIGHT BE NOT SUFFICIENT TIME TO APPLY FOR PERMISSION FROM
THE DEFENSE MINISTER.

REPORTER: FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER THANAT KHOMAN COMPARED YOU TO
A TIGHT-ROPE WALKER. ARE YOU CROSSING AN ABYSS?

PHICHAO: I DEEPLY RESPECT FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER THANAT
KHOMAN, SO PLEASE AVOID ANY QUESTION FOR ME TO COMMENT ON
HIM OR ANY STATEMENT HE MADE. END FTEXT.

WHITEHOUSE

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